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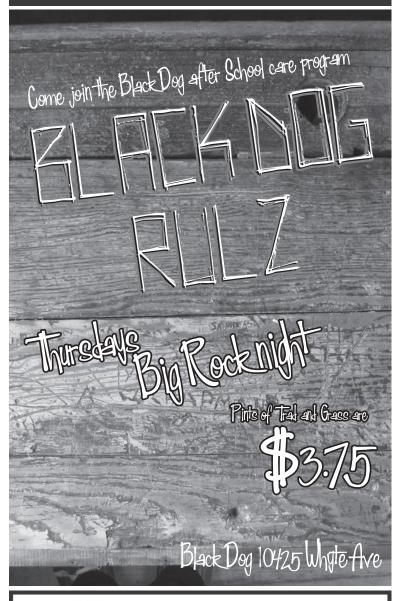


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albumreview

Radiohead In Rainbows

In Rainbows Independent

PAUL BLINOV Arts & Entertainment Editor

Poor Thom Yorke. A man known for his paranoid sentiments and bleak outlook has ended up fronting one of the world's largest bands and facing the pressure of millions of fans, critics, and even a few haters waiting to pounce on any new Radiohead track they can get at.

But amid so much nerve-wracking hype, the band just dutifully carries on at its own pace—Yorke had released a solo album, *The Eraser* in between this album and their last one. Now, four years after *Hail to the Thief*, we've been given *In Rainbows*.

It's a guitar record, like *Ok Computer* and *The Bends*, but it's not that poppy; it's dark and brooding, like *Kid A* and *Amnesiac*, but lacks their emphasis on

electronics; it's a return to form, but an experimental side-step to the left. On album number seven, Yorke and the boys have managed to deliver a package that hints at pretty much every period in their career without sounding like they're grasping desperately at those days for any under-used ideas.

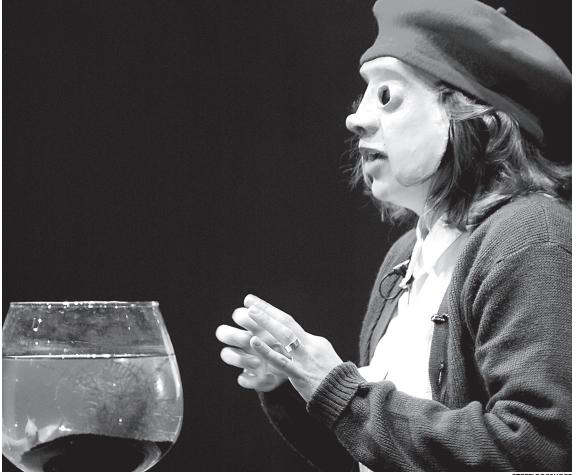
Opener "15 Step" is a good example: its fuzzy electonic beats immediately recall Yorke's *Eraser* solo project, but the vocal melody he lays down on top is nothing like he's ever done before: rhythmic, fast, and soulful. It then swells up with plucked guitar riffs, live drumming overtop the beats, and even shouting children. Once it reaches its stuttering boiling point—with all of the above in full swing behind Yorke's

rallying cry of "You reel me out / then you come astray"—it fades away much faster than it came.

The following track, "Bodysnatchers," is the closest that Radiohead's been to the straight-shooter rock of *The Bends* since 1995: it's dominated mostly by fuzzed-out guitars, but a spectral, howling synth line cuts through the distortion to bleed into the crystalline, focused chorus before falling into a wonderfully messy guitar bit.

"House of Cards" is the most bizarre track here; Yorke's out-of-character opening lyric of "I don't wanna be your friend / I just wanna be your lover" is sung over reggae-tinged, beachfriendly guitar and ghostly backing vocals that eventually fade into distant, hazy guitar shredding. But even at their most experimental, Radiohead seems comfortable—just another song for them. But for listeners, it's a thrilling experience.

With *In Rainbows*, Radiohead has given their fans exactly what they wanted: an album that simultaneously combines nostalgia's knowing twinge and the prickle of excitement from a new discovery. It seems to be what they do best.



STEFFI ROSSKOPI

MASKING EMOTIONS Liisa Repo-Martell wears a number of different faces during her Citadel performance of *I, Claudia*



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